

Personal Pieces

A personal narrative

- focuses on a single incident in the writer's life
- has a clear purpose, the significance of which is clear to the reader
- is written in first person
- has many relevant sensory details
- includes the author's feelings and thoughts
- often includes dialogue

A memoir

- focuses on a person, place, or animal which has a particular significance in the writer's life
- has a particular focus, an element which receives the most emphasis
- recreates for the reader incidents shared with the person, place, or animal
- reveals writer's knowledge of and feelings about the person, place, or animal
- shares new insights gained in recalling the significance of the subject of the memoir
- makes the person, place, or animal come alive for the reader

A personal essay

- has a clear and focused purpose or idea
- may contain an internal narrative or story telling technique that is sequenced chronologically
- employs a natural and informal style of writing
- includes details and/or personal reflections in order to make their significance to the purpose clear
- uses descriptive writing to allow readers to connect with the writer's personal experience and reaction to it
- uses effective connective words and phrases which lead the reader through the experience and the thinking/conclusion reached by the writer
- highlights the writer's reflection on the focused purposed as an essential part of the personal essay

Personal Pieces

Is there evidence of focused purpose in the pieces? Where?	
Can you tell why the events are important to the writers?	
How do the writers help the reader relate to the event, relationship, or idea?	
How do the organizational patterns lead the reader through the pieces?	
Is there evidence of relevant, supporting details in the writings?	
Do you see evidence of insight and reflection? Where?	
What other issues do you see in the personal writing samples?	